

Message Text

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INFO AMEMBASSY LONDON

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AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG

AMEMBASSY DUBLIN

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

USMISSION NATO BRUSSELS

C O N F I D E N T I A L BONN 04163

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, EEC, GW

SUBJECT: GERMAN VIEWS ON EC SUMMIT MEETING

1. AT MEETING WITH THE AMBASSADOR ON MARCH 12, FONOFF POLITICAL DIRECTOR VAN WELL EXPRESSED GENERAL SATISFACTION WITH THE RESULTS OF THE EC SUMMIT. HE SAID THAT UK RENEGOTIATION HAD BEEN BY FAR THE MOST IMPORTANT ISSUE, AND THE QUESTION OF BUDGETARY CONTRIBUTIONS THE MOST IMPORTANT ASPECT OF RENEGOTIATION. THE GERMANS FELT THAT THE SOLUTIONS FOUND WERE SATISFACTORY AND JUST FOR ALL PARTIES. THE BRITISH EVIDENTLY WERE SATISFIED THAT THEIR REQUIREMENTS HAD BEEN MET.

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2. THE FRG, VAN WELL SAID, HAD BEEN MOTIVATED ABOVE ALL

BY CONCERN FOR THE STABILITY OF WESTERN EUROPE. THE WITHDRAWAL OF BRITAIN COULD HAVE STARTED A DOWNWARD SPIRAL IN THE AREA OF EUROPEAN COOPERATION WITH UNFORESEEABLE CONSEQUENCES. THE GERMANS, AS THE MAJOR CONTRIBUTOR, WERE NATURALLY CONCERNED TO LIMIT THEIR COMMITMENTS AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE, BUT THEY WERE QUITE WELL AWARE THAT THERE WOULD BE FINANCIAL BURDENS FOR THEM WHETHER THE UK WERE IN OR OUT OF THE EC. THE GERMANS FELT THAT THE 250 MILLION UNIT OF ACCOUNT CEILING, ALONG WITH OTHER SAFETY DEVICES, PROVIDED THEM WITH SUFFICIENT SECURITY.

3. NOW, VAN WELL SAID, THE REST OF THE COMMUNITY WOULD HAVE TO WAIT FOR THE BRITISH TO DECIDE. THE GERMANS FELT THAT THEY HAD DONE THEIR JOB. HOWEVER, THEY WOULD WELCOME ANY HELP FROM BRITAIN'S FRIENDS OUTSIDE THE EC WHICH MIGHT ASSIST THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT AND THE BRITISH PEOPLE TO MAKE THE RIGHT DECISION. TO SOME EXTENT, NEW ZEALAND, AUSTRALIA, AND THE CANADIANS WERE ALREADY PLAYING THIS ROLE. VAN WELL MENTIONED THAT THE FRG AMBASSADOR IN LONDON, VON HASE, HAD SPECIFICALLY ASKED A LARGE NUMBER OF BRITISH OFFICIALS AND POLITICIANS WHO WERE FAVORABLY INCLINED TOWARD EC MEMBERSHIP WHETHER OUTSIDE SUPPORT WOULD BE HELPFUL, AND THE CONCLUSION HE HAD DRAWN FROM THEIR RESPONSES WAS THAT IT VERY DEFINITELY WOULD. (COMMENT: VAN WELL OBVIOUSLY MEANT TO URGE US TO USE OUR INFLUENCE WITH THE BRITISH IN WHATEVER WAY WE COULD.)

4. VAN WELL EMPHASIZED THE GERMAN VIEW THAT THE "COUNCIL OF EUROPE" HAD PROVED TO BE A SUCCESS IN ITS FIRST TRIAL. IT HAD TAKEN A NUMBER OF DIFFICULT OPERATIONAL DECISIONS AND THERE HAD BEEN NO PROCEDURAL PROBLEMS. IT HAD DONE FAR MORE, HE SAID, THAN SIMPLY RUBBER-STAMP AGREEMENTS REACHED BY THE MINISTERS IN BRUSSELS. IN ORDER TO UNDERLINE THIS POINT, HE MENTIONED THAT THE GERMAN DELEGATION HAD GONE TO DUBLIN WITHOUT HAVING AN INTERNALLY-AGREED POSITION ON THE SUBJECT OF BUDGETARY CONTRIBUTIONS AND HAD HAD TO WORK THIS OUT WHILE THEY WERE THERE. VAN WELL ALSO EMPHASIZED THE CRUCIAL ROLE PLAYED BY CHANCELLOR

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SCHMIDT WHO HE SAID HAD "CARRIED THE BALL MUCH OF THE TIME". FOREIGN MINISTER GENSCHER ALSO FOUND SPECIAL WORDS OF PRAISE FOR THE CHANCELLOR IN HIS REPORT TO THE BUNDESTAG (SUMMARIZED IN SEPTTEL).
HILLENBRAND

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